2. Guideline have been issued by National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) for recovery of service charges by blood banks in different sector. As per these guidlines, government and voluntary blood banks may charge Rs. 250/- per unit of blood as service charge for issuing blood to patients of their own hospitals or to other government or voluntary sector hospitals and subsidies rest of the cost. These blood banks while issueing blood to private nursing homes/hospitals may realise full processing cost of Rs. 500/-. The blood banks run in private sector may recover cost towards service charges to a maximum of Rs. 500/- per unit. The guidelines also permit cost recovery for additional tests (other than mandatory) done on the blood unit.

3. It has been reported that by and large there is not much variation from NACO guidelines in the service charges being recovered by blood banks in the private sector in the country. However, it is noticed that some stand alone blood banks and blood banks attached to corporate or private sector recover service charges which are much higher than the one circulated by the government on the grounds of carrying out test in addition to the mandatory tests and using consumables of higher price.

4. Since different blood banks have varying overhead costs in handling and testing of blood, and since there is no legal provision to fix uniform blood processing charges, the blood banks are not being penalised for charging variable rates. However, the state bodies such as State AIDS Control Societies and State Blood Tranfusion councils are seized of this issue and from time to time during meeting with private blood banks, have been insisting and urging upon them to follow NACO guidelines on recovery of service charges.

Foreign investment in print media

†*207. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had obtained the opinion of experts in print media before granting permission to foreign capital investment in print media;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of expert consulted and opinion expressed by each of them; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) The review of implementation of the policy of 1955 regarding foreign investment in print media has been an ongoing process since 1989. Expert bodies have also been expressing their views at various fora. The decision of the Government was taken after addressing all concerns expressed by various bodies including those expressed by the Standing Committee on Information Technology.

Consequences of FDI in Print Media

*208. SHRI LALU PRASAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have allowed 26 per cent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Print Media;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Parliamentary Committee on Information Technology had recommended against Foreign Direct Investment in Print Media;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the decision of Government will have disastrous consequence on country's security; and

(d) if answers to parts (a) to (c) be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to review their decision?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) The Government has decided to allow Foreign Direct Investment upto 26% in Indian entities publishing newspapers and periodicals dealing in news and current affairs. It has also been decided to allow Indian editions of foreign scientific, technical and speciality magazines/periodicals/journals and foreign investment upto 74% in Indian entities publishing scientific, technical and specially magazines/periodicals/journals. The Standing Committee on Information Technology which examined the subject of 'Entry of Foreign Print Media and Foreign Direct Investment in Print Media' had discussed the pros and cons of allowing foreign investment in print media and entry of foreign